

**ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL HAZARDOUS WASTE PUBLIC
CONSULTATION MEETING: TRANSCRIPT**

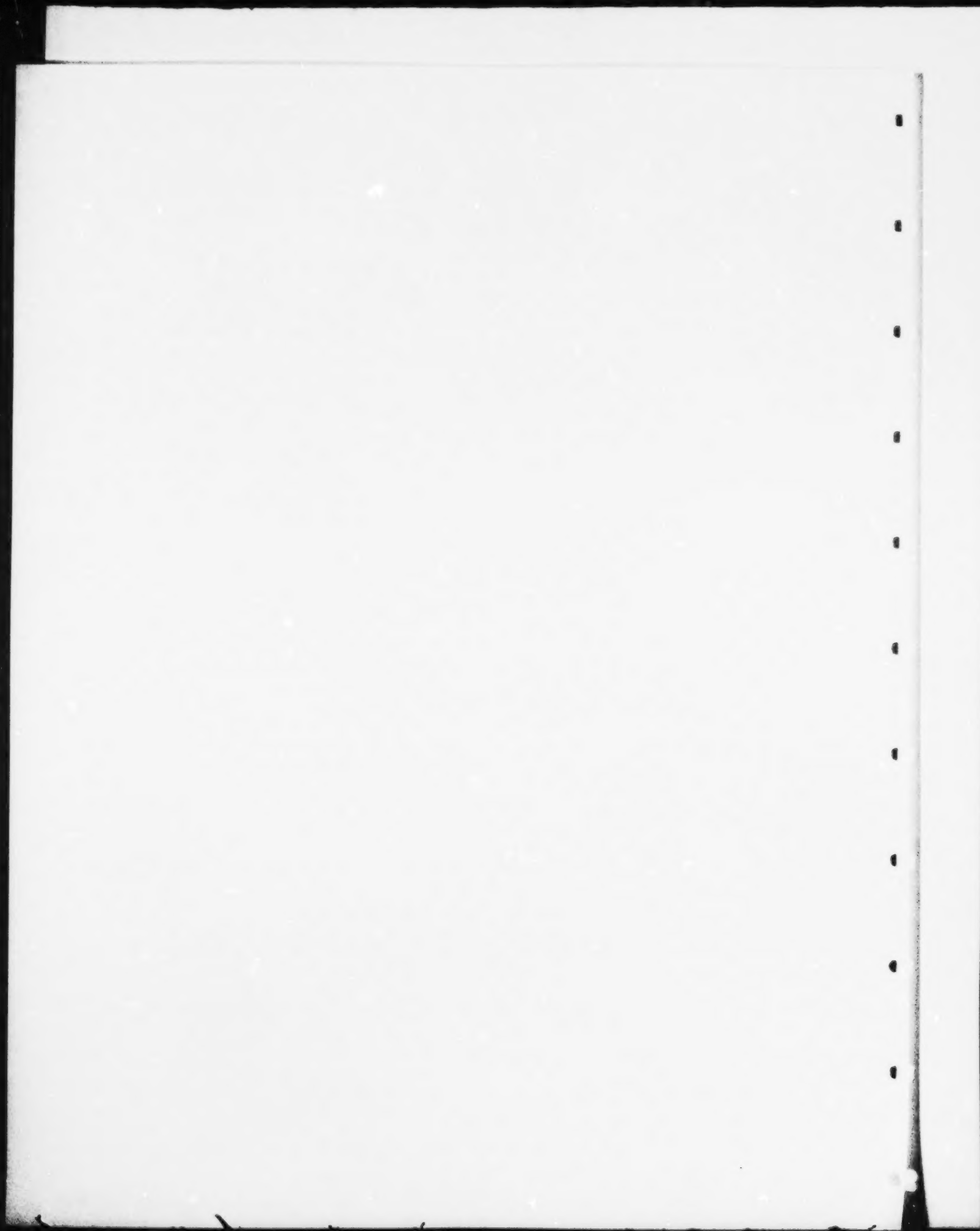
CHATHAM, NEW BRUNSWICK

FEBRUARY 13, 1986

**New Brunswick
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LAPIERRE:

Good evening and welcome to the third meeting of the public consultation program concerning hazardous waste in New Brunswick and all other aspects of waste management for the Province.

My name is Louis LaPierre. I'm a professor of biology at the University of Moncton and also Chairman of the New Brunswick Environmental Council. I'll be presiding as Chairman of tonight's meeting, and before going on further I'd like to present the other members at the table here.

To my far right is Mr. Ken Langmaid. Mr. Langmaid is a soil scientist, now retired and living in St. Andrews. Next is Mr. Helen Taylor, a retired businesswoman from Doaktown, not too far up the road. On my immediate left Mr. Donald Smith from Belledune and on my far left Mr. Dave Kerr from Edmundston. Both Mr. Smith and Mr. Kerr are professional engineers.

As you know we are all members of the New Brunswick Environmental Council and if you wish any further information on who we are, there are some pamphlets on the side table which give a further description of the members.

The purpose of tonight's meeting and for each of the following meetings, is to provide an informal forum. I'd like to stress an **Informal forum** for all New Brunswickers to voice their concerns regarding the subject of hazardous waste or related waste management issues in New Brunswick. As you all know, hazardous waste and waste in general is being generated at an ever increasing rate and we in New Brunswick are not immune to that generation.

Some of our waste are causing us some concern. As you know, we are not a heavily industrialized Province but we do generate over 1,800 tons of hazardous waste each year. This waste has to be disposed of. At the present time, some of it is properly disposed of, others aren't.

Once we finish our tour through the Province, we will be preparing a report. The report will represent the views of New Brunswickers concerning hazardous waste management and waste management in general. We hope to have this report ready by the early part of May and it would be presented to the Minister and hopefully go on to the Legislature for government decision this spring. We can consider your input into the decision process at an early stage.

I understand there are documents on the side table which give different information on hazardous wastes but there's one document in particular which is important. That document stresses the government's policy. What the government would like as a waste management plan for New Brunswick. In a few moments I've asked one of the government officials present to elaborate on the document so you can find out, for those of you who haven't had time to read the document, what are the main points in the document. There are three main points and I think it would be important that you be made aware of what the government sees as a management strategy for New Brunswick.

So before we start if any of you need translation devices, I understand that there are translation devices, headphones, so if you at any time feel that you need some assistance, just go over to the table here.

I would ask at this time, before we go on to the formal presentations, what we would like to do would be to get a short introduction from the government. What their proposal is. Then I would ask any members present if they wish to make a formal presentation. Just raise your hands and I will keep count of the hands and then anyone who wishes to comment at any time, just raise your hand. Feel free, it's an open forum. We don't want to have...you know, just your comments and that'll be fine. So I would now ask Mr. Hill if he would give us a brief description of the proposed plan.

HILL:

Thank you Mr. Chairman. As Dr. LaPierre mentioned, there are several documents at the table as you come in the door and there are three in particular that you probably will be interested in. One is a document called Hazardous Waste in New Brunswick, 1985 Status Report. That was released by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Environment for public review about a month ago as the major component of a package of three documents, the purpose of which was to bring New Brunswickers up to date on where the Province presently stands. So the major document is the Hazardous Waste Status Report which is, as I said, is about a month old.

Then there's a blue document called Controlled Waste Disposal for New Brunswick. Again, it's much shorter, printed on blue paper and then finally there's a document that was called Excerpts from the Departmental Estimates Address in June 1985 by the former Minister, Mr. Harmer in which he introduced the concept of what's called comprehensive waste management for New Brunswick.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, I'll take about three minutes here. These are lengthy documents and it's clear that if people present haven't had a chance to read them prior to this evening, they won't have a chance to do it this evening. But if I may just try to summarize very briefly what the documents represent.

The Province has been carrying out what you might call technical studies on hazardous waste issues for about three or four years. The earlier studies, some of which are here this evening as well, were started in 1982 in cooperation with Environment Canada. That study program has continued on for the last three or four years. The most recent study which the Department carried out was an inventory of hazardous waste generation in the Province, which was conducted last summer. So the Hazardous Waste Status Report document that I mentioned earlier contains a breakdown of the inventory data which reports approximately 1,800 tons of hazardous waste being generated in New Brunswick each year.

The Province's position at this stage, and I think you'd have to describe it as a sort of a conceptual position, there are no final decisions that have been made, it's a operating proposal as perhaps best describes it. It certainly isn't concrete, final decision making, but the basic proposal is that, given the volume of hazardous waste which is generated in New Brunswick according to our inventory data and also the extremely high cost of permanent hazardous waste destruction facilities such as high-temperature incinerators that burn products at 3,000 degrees centigrade and so on.

It's not feasible to conceive of a situation where a permanent hazardous waste disposal facility will be constructed in New Brunswick. Furthermore, there are facilities in more industrialized parts of the country, like Ontario and Quebec, in existence now and more are planned. For example, a PCB incinerator is planned for completion in Quebec in 1988.

The general view is that given the fact that places like Ontario and Quebec are so much more heavily industrialized, so much more densely populated that the future in Canada will see the development of permanent hazardous waste destruction facilities in places such as Ontario, Quebec and Alberta. Therefore the Province's general view at this stage is, that rather than develop a hazardous waste destruction facility of our own, the emphasis should be on very careful monitoring, recycling, treatment on site of generation.

But if there are some wastes left over that fall into the hazardous category, this material should be collected, stored on a interim basis and then shipped to the more heavily industrialized parts of the country where facilities exist for their destruction.

I should mention, Mr. Chairman, that both Ontario and Quebec have already confirmed, for example, the Quebec government announced publicly last June that hazardous waste from Atlantic Canada, all Provinces in Atlantic Canada would be accepted at the hazardous waste destruction facilities that exist now in Quebec and that are planned for the future.

So the basic position, I guess, on hazardous waste is: monitor it, know exactly where it is, ensure that it does not escape into the environment at its site of generation; recycle it wherever possible; eliminate it and treat it on site wherever possible. But if there is some residue left over, arrange for careful interim storage and shipment to, for example, Quebec for destruction. So that's hazardous waste.

Now as I mentioned, there's another document here, which is the blue one, which talks about controlled waste. And finally there's the copy of the speech from last June in which the former Minister talked about the development of regional landfill sites. If you separate out hazardous wastes for a minute, there are two other categories of wastes that we're concerned about.

One is what you might call ordinary, domestic garbage. It's the material that we all produce out of our homes. It's just normal everyday refuse. At the present time in New Brunswick there are more than, if I'm not mistaken, 150 separate disposal sites for that material. Many of them are run by municipalities, and many others are run by the Department of Transportation, the so-called rural dumps.

The Department's proposal in the area of solid waste or domestic garbage is to reduce dramatically the number of dump sites in New Brunswick over the next five years, to go from where the numbers are now, maybe it's 150, down to half of that or less. And by closing down the smaller dumps, move to a system that is described by our technical people as regional solid waste management, in which up to 13 regional solid waste management commissions would be established in the Province. There might be more than 13 but 13 is the present operating number. The regional solid waste management commissions would include major municipalities as well as unincorporated areas surrounding the major municipalities where there would be a closing of smaller dumps and the joining together of forces on a regional level. The economies of scale would then make it possible to develop landfill sites which would be of much higher quality, much higher degree of environmental acceptability than is presently the case. So that's the basic plan for what is called solid waste.

There is one additional category and that is material which falls between the hazardous waste on one end and the solid waste on the other end. We've defined that material as controlled waste. We have two reasonably good examples of controlled waste that would be familiar to people everywhere in New Brunswick I imagine. The first is asbestos insulation which has been removed from public buildings because of health concerns about respiration of asbestos in interior air over the last several years. As I think everyone in this hall will know that it's become impossible for the agencies or institutions that remove these amounts of asbestos insulation from their buildings. It's become totally impossible for those organizations to find a place to bury that material because there is a perception out there that that is hazardous waste.

Our technical view, based on collaboration from all other Provinces in Canada that would suggest that asbestos waste is not hazardous waste but it is perhaps something that should not be put into normal domestic landfills. Therefore we need a separate category of secure landfills, which we're calling controlled waste disposal sites, to take material which is inappropriate for one reason or another in the local dump site or, in the future, in the local regional landfill. But at the same time it's not material which requires the sophisticated high-tech destruction technology that would be needed for something like PCB's or other hazardous wastes.

So the basic proposal that the Province has come up with is to develop a network of between three and six controlled waste disposal sites in the Province between now and the end of 1988. Asbestos insulation is one example of material that would go there and there are many others that are outlined in the blue document.

The controlled waste sites would be located on Crown land, in remote locations, away from human habitation. A minimum buffer zone of between two and three kilometers would be maintained in perpetuity around these sites to ensure that future development wouldn't happen in those areas. They would be located in areas with appropriate soil conditions, away from water resources, and kept under very close control by the Province. People who wanted to bury material at those sites, such as asbestos insulation and so on, would be charged by the Province for that service and it would be a user pay system. So that's it in a nutshell. I said I was going to take five minutes, I think as you know, I sometimes find it difficult to keep anything I say to five minutes, but that in a nutshell is the basic proposal that the Province has come up with for this point in time.

Hazardous waste is to be monitored, stored and shipped out of the Province for disposal. Solid waste is to be disposed of in larger, more efficient, more environmentally-acceptable regional landfill sites and that middle-ground material, controlled waste, is to be buried under very secure and careful conditions in a network of controlled waste sites located across the Province which would be operated by the government on a user-pay basis.

LAPIERRE:

Thank you Mr. Hill. So I guess you have three components of solid waste management for the future. One thing I'd like to just add to Mr. Hill's comments is that all these sites, the controlled and the hazardous waste and also the regional commissions would be operated on a user-pay basis. They would have to be self-sufficient. Since society generates the waste, it becomes a collective problem of society to dispose of their wastes so this is seen as a user-pay service all the way.

I guess at the present time, I would invite members of the audience if they have any presentations to just rise. Could you please identify yourself?

BOWES:

I will. Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. My name is Mike Bowes. I am the Mayor of Chatham and I'd like to welcome the Council, yourself and members of the Council as well as the Departmental officials to the Miramichi. We're pleased to have this opportunity to share our concerns with you and listen to the proposals of the Department for solid waste disposal.

I don't have a formal written presentation which I will make. I have a few short comments that I'd like to make, and I have to leave afterwards for another engagement, so it's not out of lack of interest that I leave. However, I'll inform you that as well with the Town of Chatham this evening we have Councillor John McLaughlin, who is a Councillor interested in these issues, as well as Mr. Cormier, who is the operator of our solid waste disposal site. So our Town officials are here and if anybody does have concerns that relate to the Town of Chatham, I'm sure you can address them to either Mr. Cormier or Mr. McLaughlin afterwards.

I think I will just make a couple of points and I'll relate to some of the concerns that have been raised. I think that too often in environmental issues we're reacting rather than showing, reacting to issues as they occur rather than showing the proper type of leadership as is taking place in this case, whereas we go out and solicit views and consult before introducing policy. Speaking as a person who has been an observer in terms of environmental issues and the responsibilities that a municipality has. One of the problems that we quite often experience is that as our knowledge grows in this field, our guidelines and standards change. Mind you most of them are improvements. It is sometimes different as a municipality to continually change your standards to comply with the new standards that may be in place because what may have been OK five years ago when our solid waste disposal site was established, is not necessarily acceptable today. Our cost of operating, we have to be able to plan over the long term what the costs of operating that facility are and that is a concern that many municipal officials have, I'm sure.

I think in discussing it earlier, you were mentioning that there have been many municipal officials come forward so far. I think in part that it is because there are generally good relations between Department officials and the municipalities. There generally for formalized interchange of views. We have our regional inspectors, such as Mr. Cormier, who keep us on our toes and who we correspond with and relate to on a frequent basis. We go right on through to Mr. Lutes and through to Mr. Marquis now as the Deputy Minister. So, the municipalities do have an avenue, however, the public generally doesn't have the avenue available to them prior to the implementation of standards and new regulations to express their concerns.

And I think that we've recently seen that in the whole Renous issue on the PCB uproar. I think that most people are only too willing to cooperate and to listen and to allow the development of the necessary facilities in their communities. I think that the manner in which the whole issue was handled is one in which the necessary trust that has to develop in the population before you can expect a good degree of cooperation didn't quite come about in that case from the way the matter was handled by the various officials.

One of the points I want to make and it's a concern and it's one that's not directly related, it is related to the issue of waste management and hazardous waste disposal, is the very deep concern that we have about our groundwater resources. We feel that there are many government policies which affect our groundwater resources, other than such ones as hazardous waste disposal sites or any controlled waste disposal sites or any regional landfill facility that you might want to put in there. The government, and I realize part of your responsibility under the Clean Environment Act, the government through its planning regulations in terms of allowing residential development in many areas, have an impact on communities such as ours where you continue to allow strip development and development in rural areas which affect both the agricultural land, the land that might be available for that, as well as affect the necessary groundwater areas that may be available to communities such as ours to provide the adequate water supplies that we may need in the future. Because many of the communities, because of the age of their facilities and the deteriorating quality of their water, in terms of, I think specifically in our case, the increased manganese and iron levels. We're very concerned about groundwater and what's going to happen to it and the effect on our groundwater supplies.

The point I want to make as to solid waste disposal. The hazardous waste and the waste that you would call controlled waste disposal sites such as asbestos which you don't put in hazardous waste. Anything other than the normal domestic garbage, we see as being a responsibility of the Province. We have established, the town has established a regional, not a regional but it functions as a regional, but our own solid waste disposal site. We wish to maintain that for our own domestic purposes, basically for domestic garbage, what we see as domestic garbage. We have guidelines which restrict the use of that facility by industrial users, we restrict the use by contractors in terms of disposal of building materials and so on. And we wish to have those restrictions continue. We have a very limited facility. It may look like 80 or 100 acres to somebody, but it doesn't take long, in terms of domestic garbage if we look at ten years down the road, that we're going to be really cramped for space. We feel that industrial users, in terms of industrial waste disposal, whether it be through terms of chemicals, or excess building materials from construction projects and so on. The government should be providing those. Now I realize you wish to provide those in part, on a user-pay basis.

But there are many popular misconceptions around. To the ordinary guy in the street, a dump is a dump. In our case it's the Chatham dump. They think that that's where anything that people want to throw out, goes. And we don't quite agree. Mr. Cormier can tell you, he's the guy that's on the line everyday and is putting the run to people and so on. It's a concern of ours and it's a concern that we would like to see addressed and we would like to see the Province provide the necessary facility in the area to alleviate that. Because what happens is that when we don't allow contractors to dispose of waste building materials from demolitions and so on, the other Mr. Cormier, your Mr. Cormier, is constantly checking out reports of dumping in pits and in authorized disposal sites. That's a concern because those things may very well be within our watershed.

I know that some of the other citizens will have comments but I'd like to thank you for this opportunity to express our concerns to you on that. It's an opportunity that we don't always get. I know that as a municipality, the Departmental officials are very accessible to us and we can get our point of view across but it's an issue that is quite often not discussed in public and it doesn't get the airing that it has been through the last week or so with these hearings.

And I think the government is to be commended for taking the initiative and I think I've been very pleased with the reports that I've seen from the feedback that you've been getting and I think it's a very worthwhile exercise. Thank you.

LAPIERRE:

Thanks a lot Mayor Bowes. I wonder if you won't mind answering a few questions before you leave. We know you are leaving shortly. One question is, I wonder if you could comment on the user-pay concept. The concept that waste is generated by citizens. Very rarely do we find industry who produces waste for the end purpose of producing waste. Normally it's a product which either serves society in one way or another.

BOWES:

There are several aspects to that in terms, you mean mainly industrial waste, waste other than domestic garbage?

LAPIERRE:

Industrial waste or the controlled waste also.

BOWES:

I think that many of the industrial users or, shall we say people who would be in a controlled waste situation, are already paying for their disposal. Many of them hire sub contractors or contractors to dispose of the materials. They're paying trucking charges which relate to some pretty good haulage rates and I think that it could have an impact on that. But, I mean, they're paying now. What you're doing is talking about adding a fee on to it, basically. It's not like in the case of some municipalities. Ours is not one of those that provide for free garbage collection. We don't provide a collection service. We provide the facility and the citizens themselves either bring their own garbage or hire private contractors to remove it. So we're not faced with that situation.

I think that people look at saying, "I pay my taxes, I'm a good corporate citizen. I should be able to dispose of my waste in your facilities that my taxes go to support." There's some validity to that. I think that a balance has to be struck. If you're talking about a specialized facility which is going to address either controlled waste or industrial waste, it's not unreasonable, I think, to have a user-pay facility. Because otherwise you have the ordinary tax payer, the people on fixed income in our community, many of them are paying taxes to support the industrial users. And those industrial users may be located outside the town boundaries in our case. We have an area here where we have two towns, three villages and several unincorporated areas right in one little central core area. You're not even counting the two villages of Blackville and Doaktown and I mean they're different, different charges.

SMITH:

In the same light I'd like to go back to Mr. Hill on this thing that you mention that you don't provide a pick-up service. What is the average around the Province? What does the majority do?

HILL:

I'm going to turn that one over to Bob Lutes.

SMITH:

And what is your plan? In other words, is that....where I live the garbage is picked up twice a week and what you're saying...

BOWES:

It's very unlikely, I think you're looking at a regional waste disposal site for domestic purposes in the area. You're going to have to look hard at our facility. I think that even if you were to establish your own.

SMITH:

Well, I wasn't actually asking that question, but that's a good one to follow up. Would your facility be acceptable as a regional dump? The other question is, what is the overall Provincial plan as far as garbage collection goes? Is there one?

LUTES:

I'll answer the first question first I guess, the Chatham facility hasn't been in use to act as a regional commission site. It's a large site, although as Mayor Bowes says, large sites fill up very quickly. But it's got some potential in terms of the soil conditions and it's central and it has the advantage of being there already. So there's a lot of potential to convert that site to a proper regional site.

I don't have the numbers on the top of my head, but I would guess that about half of the municipalities in the Province have an organized system. In some cases they provide the collection services themselves, and in some cases they contract it out. But approximately half have no formal collection and I think of the LSD's the Local Service Districts, there's very, very few, probably a handful, have proper collection.

Under the new scheme, the regional concept scheme, we are looking to rural collection. That is, we not only have a central facility that would serve a number of municipalities and local service districts, but the commission would operate a collection service as well. So instead of having the current situation where everybody runs to the nearest dump or container, whether it's operated by the Province or the municipality, contracts will be called and then the contractor will go around and pick up all the material at curb side or road side and haul it back to the central facility.

SMITH:

It would then be a universal collection system for the Province?

LUTES:

There would be in areas where we have commissions. We're talking 13...

SMITH:

Provincially, you expect to have commissions covering the whole Province?

LUTES:

No. The intent is to have commissions that would serve, we're guessing, maybe 75% of the population. There are certain rural areas of the Province that are so rural that the economies of scale don't apply and in those areas we're looking at the provincial sites to serve that purpose. We now have about 110 provincial sites. The responsibility for the operation of those sites were recently transferred from the Department of Transportation to Municipal Affairs and Environment.

Our intent is to phase out 60-70% of those sites so that we are ending up with maybe 30 or 40 sites and certain areas where, extremely remote areas basically, where you just can't have a commission site. The economies of scale are just not there. So, ultimately we're going to have three different levels, I guess, or three different operators. We're going to have commission operators. Some municipalities may wish to have their own facilities and then we'll have the third category operated by the Provincial government.

LAPIERRE:

Mr. Bowes, I wonder if you could tell us, what ensures you that hazardous waste or controlled wastes are not being dumped at your dump presently?

BOWES:

Well, we have a controlled facility. There's a gate on it. It's not fenced the way we would like, but it would take an effort by somebody to get into it and we have an operator on site at all times. We're not such a big community that people, our operators keep a good eye on it. And I mean it would be very difficult for an industrial user to dispose of materials at our dump.

LAPIERRE:

I would say, if I was an ordinary citizen and just had a five gallon can of whatever chemical, if I'm a photographer and I have chemicals or a dry cleaning unit, I just put those in cans and it goes to the garbage. Is someone checking my cans to find out that I'm not going to be able to dump that?

BOWES:

Mr. Cormier says yes.

CORMIER:

The people that are bringing in hazards, I don't think they know that it's hazardous in the first place. These people dump just about everything. That's mostly what's happening back there. If they have something to do with hazards, they know it's hazardous and they hide it, they put it in a box or something like that, they throw it and they think it's forgotten about. (tape inaudible) Who dumped it there? It's pretty hard to tell. I catch an odd one and some of them do catch, it seems to me they don't know it's hazardous. Because there are a lot of materials, people don't know whether it's hazardous or not. I think people should be more aware of poisons or bad chemicals, even for instance like batteries. I mean if your battery goes dead in the fall of the year and you turn around and buy a new battery, your old battery ends up in the dump. To me, that's quite a pollution. Acid. We find in the run of the year probably one hundred and fifty batteries. That means to say that there's 150 gallons of acid and acid to me must be going into the water stream somewhere, the Bartibog or the Little Bartibog or even your domestic water. I don't think people are aware, oh it's just a battery, but to me a battery is quite hazardous.

There's a lot of other stuff coming in there like sprays. People probably have half a can, there's a quart can or something like that, she plugs up and they throw it away. We don't notice it too much now, because we don't burn. But when we used to burn it was quite dangerous to be walking around that dump when we were burning because all these things were blowing and some of it was quite dangerous. Like propane tanks, these little ones and the big ones and the 100 gallon ones have been thrown in that dump. I found a lot of them. I notified the company who owned them and they said they were very hazardous. I used to put them aside and they'd pick them up. But lots of them have been thrown in there and I never see them. They throw them and throw their garbage on top of it and we never find them. When we came to burn on the weekend, they used to blow and that's the time I found them, I knew they were in there, so I found them.

BOWES:

We don't burn anymore.

CORMIER:

Another thing I'd like to comment on is the poisons these people are putting in to destroy the rats. What's in that? If it's poison, it's poison. You're not allowed to throw certain things in the dump and these people, they are people appointed by the government and they have contracts through the government or the town, and they come in there and put poison once a month or twice a month or whatever is required. They put it by the hundred pounds. In the run of a year, it might be a ton or two tons of poison have been put into these dumps. And the runoff of these dumps goes into streams and the rivers. That's one thing I'm quite concerned about. I know we have a well in there. It was put in there when we went in, about a year after. We were told the water was good to drink but my dog won't even drink it, and it don't seem to me, there never was any tests taken. As far as the town is concerned, they figure we're still drinking that water but I don't drink it. When the dog don't want to drink it must be quite bad.

LAPIERRE:

You don't have test wells around your dump site?

CORMIER:

No, I don't think for the last three or four years, we have been tested. I have no knowledge of it.

BOWES:

I don't believe it's one of the current standards to require test wells around waste disposal sites.

LAPIERRE:

It's not a standard I know, but it's a good safety precaution.

BOWES:

Sure, but I don't think it's ever been recommended to us and when some of my initial comments went to the changing standards and regulations, I mean, there's one now. How many test wells will we need to put it around the dump? When we're informed that there's good soil conditions, good drainage, and quite obviously the materials going into the dump are being monitored, there's an additional cost of drilling each one of those wells and maintaining it.

Whereas we wouldn't have had that requirement before I just heard it right now. I mean, that's an additional cost added on to the municipality and in dealing with the Province, who is one of our users, one of the people that we contract with to provide service, they will pay for operational maintenance and quite often the carry over on capital costs items such as that, they're not necessarily shareable expenses. Am I not right, Mr. Lutes, Mr. Cormier? So those are items that are borne by the taxpayers of the Town of Chatham in order to provide services for everybody.

One of my concerns that I expressed in changing regulations and standards, that's it. I have to go in a second. Do you have any more questions?

LAPIERRE:

There are a few questions from the floor and maybe to the mayor?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

There was a comment made by Mayor Bowes and Mr. Cormier about burning at the dump. They say they don't burn anymore. I'd like to know why the dump has been on fire since last Friday and burning at this very moment?

BOWES:

Obviously, it wasn't a set burn.

CORMIER:

No, it was people who set it. What's happening back there, when they stopped the burning, when we first came into that dump, we used to burn the dump on the weekends. I didn't like to burn during the week because it was quite hazardous, people might get hurt. Anyway, when they passed the law that it had to be stopped, I was advised by a government official not to burn anymore. So I never did set any fires. I'm quite concerned about that. But people come in there and they haul, like this time of the year or in the winter time especially, they haul hot ashes coming from the furnace, stove. They put it in the bucket and they throw the bucket in the pile so actually they didn't set fire.

So you can ask them to do whatever, you tell them not to set any fires, they're not setting any fires, because what's happening is a bucket of hot ashes and ten minutes after they are gone, the dump is on fire. That's what happened last weekend. We never had a fire in the dump since last June. I went by all summer, I put it out lots of times and during the winter an average of about three or four times a day I put a fire out. But sometime it gets away on you, you just can't catch it.

BOWES:

We're not interested in burning at our dump. I mean, we're out of that regime and we have been for a couple of years. When it happens, we're not pleased because it costs us a bundle of money and they are unbudgeted costs. We had one fire last year that cost us \$20,000, I think was the total bill by the time we had finished. And that was \$20,000 that was unbudgeted and that we had to provide the money for and it was paid by the people just of the Town of Chatham, not all the users of the dump. So those things concern us.

LAPIERRE:

Do you landfill your site everyday?

BOWES:

No we don't. We've been negotiating with the Province as to the frequency of our landfill. We do it as necessary. Let's be reasonable, you operated 110 facilities around the Province and I'd ask you does the Province landfill in all their regional dump sites every day?

LAPIERRE:

No I don't think it's being done at the present time and I think that's one of the...

BOWES:

Apply the same standards to us.

LAPIERRE:

I'm just asking the question, I didn't know how you do it.

BOWES:

Those aren't controlled facilities.

LAPIERRE:

But the proper landfilling methods would be that nothing would be left uncovered at the end of the day.

BOWES:

In a perfect world, you're going to landfill every day. There's no doubt. You're going to use a complete trench and fill method on a daily basis. But, I mean, we just heard an example of Mr. Cormier making sure what materials are going into the dump and if that being done it's not always, we're not always able to do that. Are there any other questions?

LANGMAID:

There's a recommended amount of material put in a dump trench and when it reaches that amount it should be filled and compacted. It's supposed to be airtight and water tight. Nothing goes through it, nothing comes out of it. It's sealed.

BOWES:

I know, but the Province doesn't use those standards for their own dumps...

LANGMAID:

Well, this is what we hope to do when we get these regional dumps that are big enough so we can afford to do it that without...

BOWES:

I realize that but, I mean, speaking on behalf of the municipalities, we've come a long way in terms of our management of these facilities and we have a lot further to go at that. But, I mean, we expect that the Province will follow at least the standards that we follow in their own facilities.

LANGMAID:

We'll push them for that, but we hope to have perfect, or nearly perfect, dumpsites all around. It'll cost money but it's up to the citizens to pay that. They're creating the problem, they've got to pay for it.

BOWES:

That's why we want to ensure, if I could on that, that the costs are fairly borne. Not just borne by the citizens of the Town of Chatham for the whole region because...

LANGMAID:

They should be borne by the user as he brings the stuff in, he pays.

BOWES:

Sure, but I know, but Municipal Affairs also gives us the same rate on the dump as they provide for their own facilities which are operated at a lower cost, I believe.

LANGMAID:

This is one of the things which should be changed.

BOWES:

And lower standards.

LAPIERRE:

OK, there are a few....Mayor Bowes indicated that he had to leave so...

BOWES:

I'm sorry I have to go, it's your show...

LAPIERRE:

I just want to...there's maybe a lady who wanted to speak.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

I do want to say something. Where the Chatham dump is situated, we're surrounded by bush and the matter of burning at the dump is not just pollution in the air where you can't open your windows in the summertime, as it was last summer..

BOWES:

That fire we had last summer, yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

When that fire started last year, it jumped the line, right? And it went into the bush, it was over the power line. I went up there to try to find out what was going on, just to see because we're only two miles from that dump and we are surrounded by trees. I couldn't get any information out of anybody and when I talked to you once Mike, you told me you chose to live there. I don't think that's a responsible attitude. That was last year when they were burning all the time. Every time we've ever contacted anybody at the site, we always get the same story, that's it's an accidental fire and like this gentleman has said, that should be controlled because it's not just the smoke in the air, it's the danger that is there for the whole area of the Miramichi.

BOWES:

We agree with that. We don't want to burn. I mean we don't burn as a policy and we try to put it out as soon as it starts. We pay the cost for it, the people in the unincorporated area, the area in which you live, use that dump and that facility, but you don't share in the cost of putting out those fires.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Do our taxes for the municipality not go anywhere for that?

BOWES:

Yes, they go for the disposal but they don't pay that extra cost for fire fighting and the capital cost that go towards improvements to the dump.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

I'd gladly pay it if you instituted it to make sure that it is covered at the end of the day as suggested and then we're protected. Because it's a very bad, and very dangerous situation.

BOWES:

You express that to the Provincial officials who restrict the amount of money that we get.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

He's right there. OK. Thanks very much.

LAPIERRE:

Thanks a lot Madame. Sir?

WILLISTON:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, Mayor Bowes before he leaves I would wish maybe he could listen and answer a comment that the latest issue and I would presume Mayor Bowes, let's say it has certainly brought my attention and a number of the people here have been talking. Is that materials being dumped from the industrial users down at the NB Power. It appears that you people and the Town of Chatham have rejected this. Is that right, yes or no?

BOWES:

We're not rejecting it for what it is. Our facility is for domestic garbage and domestic garbage only and if you're tearing down a house in the Town of Chatham or you're tearing down a house in an unincorporated area, we don't allow you to put your materials in there. If you're cleaning brush from your lot, let's say (tape inaudible) we don't as a matter of policy. Now I don't think we were even approached by anybody about disposal of materials from there before they started putting them in the (tape inaudible). We know very little about it. And as far as we are concerned, the industrial waste disposal is a problem of the Province. OK?

WILLISTON:

So really then Mr. Chairman, I'd presume that Mr. Bowes is passing this back through the provincial people then. Is that the interpretation I'm getting from you.

BOWES:

No, our facility is for domestic garbage, plain and period and simple. And we weren't asked by NB Power or by the Province or anybody, to my knowledge, by the subcontractor, to use the site. Somehow that story started and I don't know where it came from and as far as we're concerned our dump is not for those purposes and not for NB Power or for Joe Blow contractor who tears down a house in the community. We don't want those materials there.

WILLISTON:

Could I ask Mr. Chairman again to Mayor Bowes just exactly what he would consider, is NB Power being a good corporate citizen? I have some information here just how much taxes they paid your town Mr. Mayor.

BOWES:

Sure NB Power is a good corporate citizen. You happen to be on the Board of Commissioners of NB Power.

WILLISTON:

I most certainly am.

BOWES:

And we've had good cooperation with the people at NB Power. NB Power never asked us a thing about that. I mean, our contractors are good corporate citizens too as are other industrial firms in the area. But if it's waste, we have neither the expertise nor the space to provide for industrial wastes. OK? I mean, NB Power has a lot more expertise and the Province with their various departments (tape inaudible)

....that it's a very innocuous material, actually what it is, it's earth and it's an innocuous material but (tape inaudible) so on, I mean, as a builder it's up to you to provide, to find, those places. We have no fight with NB Power, NB Power have been great as far as we're concerned.

WILLISTON:

I might make it very clear Mr. Chairman that I didn't come on behalf of contractors. I came on behalf, I happen to be a resident in the area where the material has been dumped and I have just as much a concern as anybody else when I realize the town of Chatham has saw fit to turn it down and then the reasons to turn it down....

BOWES:

We were never asked.

WILLISTON:

OK. Maybe we could clear the question up and just on that behalf but you did turn the material down, or the people who were disposing of it there?

BOWES:

This is what this whole exercise is about. It's not our responsibility to provide for industrial waste disposal. We provide (tape inaudible) and if NB Power want to dispose there, they can approach us and talk to us. But I haven't, you know I've mentioned in the past with the a couple of people at NB Power, we've had excellent cooperation with them. I couldn't speak more highly of them in terms of cooperating with us on this construction project.

LAPIERRE:

Could we get just...OK...we'll ask someone else.

BOWES:

It's not the town to show them...

LAPIERRE:

/ That's OK.

TAYLOR:

Could Mr. Williston elaborate a little more for the Council what the material is, where it's going and who is responsible, etc.

LAPIERRE:

And also what happens to industrial waste? I seem to think the contractors have to have their own dump, is that it?

WILLISTON:

Mr. Chairman, the question that was addressed to me, the most I can say is that there's been a meeting scheduled in our local community for next Tuesday, and it was to the effect that there's material that's being dumped from the construction site at NB Power. I can't really tell you, it's an unsigned document that is posted in the local community and at local stores and I think probably the local media certainly the papers, etc., have stated this here. And it is a concern to me. I'm more than concerned of the fact that maybe it's something that the Town of Chatham...when you drive to the dump site. I had a look at it yesterday and it says that any materials that's going to be deposited there, somebody is checking it out eh? I certainly will admit that it is very concern to me, beyond that I wouldn't know. If the Town of Chatham, and I would hope Mayor Bowes is listening, if they had people that would check this material out and apparently if they rejected it there has to be a reason then that we should have a concern. A major concern to me and I would just wonder why it's coming to an area such as ours.

BOWES:

I'll tell you. We haven't rejected any material because we haven't had the opportunity. We didn't know what the material was and before the stuff was dumped out in McKnight Road we have nothing to do with it.

WILLISTON:

I'm getting conflicting stories, Mr. Chairman, Mayor Bowes says that they haven't rejected it at the Chatham dump.

BOWES:

We hadn't rejected it before we put one bit of it in there. I mean recently, we've made them aware of our policy on the use of our dump. That's all we've done. We've made them aware that we don't, as a matter of practice, take industrial wastes. All we do is restrict it to domestic garbage. And if they want to come out and say we have 200 cords of dead wood that we want to put out there, scrapped wood, rotted wood, we'd say no. And that's just organic material. Anyway.

TAYLOR:

What's bothering me here is that no one has said whether they approached NB Power and whether NB Power has permission to dump their goods there or has anyone talked to NB Power?

BOWES:

The reports in the media are from local residents who say that the Town of Chatham refused to put the run to them. I don't know where the reports come from, but it's not true. And we didn't have any analysis on the material and say this is some God-awful material, we don't want it there, go dump it out at the McKnight Road dump. We weren't aware of it. I was as surprised as anybody when I got calls from residents saying, you won't take this stuff in your dump, what are they doing dumping it in ours. Which is a concern. I can imagine, you know, I sympathize with that because the facility is not there, not provided by the Province for disposal of industrial waste.

LAPIERRE:

That's the McKnight dump, I understand is a Provincial disposal site?

BOWES:

It's a Provincial, one of your rural dumps which I see smoke coming from occasionally. And it's not controlled.

WILLISTON:

Mr. Chairman, may I say before Mayor Bowes leaves that I would like to make it very clear that it was brought to my attention by several citizens that the Town of Chatham saw fit to condemn the material that was there, and irregardless of what Mayor Bowes says that it was being taken to Black River and we're showing a very deep concern over it. Thank you.

LAPIERRE:

OK. I think for the sake of moving the meeting along, there are a few other people who have asked for the right to speak so we will.

JEFFREY:

For more information on the McKnight dump. My name is Wayne Jeffrey, with Henry MacDonald here. They've been dumping this stuff out there since around the middle of January. It doesn't burn although the Department of Transport has been trying to burn it for the last few days. I don't know what the guidelines are on the dump out there. I moved out there after it went in but there are not gates, there's no supervision. Anybody can go in any time of the day or night and apparently they were dumping this stuff at night and dump anything with nobody knowing. Now I've got about the closest house to that dump and I am very concerned.

LAPIERRE:

Is is a large quantity of material that's dumped?

JEFFREY:

A large quantity?

LAPIERRE:

Yes.

JEFFREY:

Well, they said the trench out there, one day when they put the dump in a year ago, would last at least two and a half years. The trench is full now and it's been a year. The stuff they took in there, they bulldozed a lot of it under but just looking at it I'd say there was twenty loads anyway, that's trailer loads. You've got anything out there from washing machines to refrigerators, car frames, beds, all kinds of construction material. There's fires continuously going on out there. What else is there out there?

LANGMAID:

May I ask Bob to find out about that from the Power Commission and report to us the next meeting please.

LUTES:

Yes, maybe I'll just clarify some things now here. The material that we're talking about is a mixture of alumina, silica and calcium oxide and a few other inert ingredients. It's like a gunnite material. It's dry. It's like a powdered firebrick type material. It comes in dry form and it's applied as a refractory surface to the boiler. It's the sort of thing you add water to and you spray it on the boiler wall, then it sets up and creates a refractory wall basically. My understanding is that in the process of applying the material to the boiler wall some of this material drops on the ground and it ends up on drop sheets and it's gathered up and put in trucks and hauled away. To date our records indicate nine loads have gone to the McKnight Road site and six to the Town of Chatham site.

But the material is quite inert. As Mayor Bowes says, it's basically sand and it may have a strange sounding name but it's pretty innocuous.

JEFFREY:

Will you guarantee me that ten, 20 years down the road that there's no harm that could come to my family from the materials? Or from any other materials that could be dumped in that dump? Could you give me a guarantee of that?

LUTES:

I'm talking about the material that NB Power is taking to those sites and if we've got a problem with that material, we've got a problem with a lot of other things. I mean that is pretty inert material. It's basically sand, it's silica.

JEFFREY:

That's one particular material that we found going to that dump. What is the government doing to control anything that might be going there? They burn there all the time, eh?

LUTES:

Yes.

JEFFREY:

What's to stop the fumes from going into the air and killing somebody? Is that what they're waiting for to happen?

LUTES:

No, we are attempting to cut out the burning in all of the sites in the Province. We have recently issued certificates to municipal sites and also to the Department of Transportation sites. We've issued 60-70 to date and we've got a long way to go, there's a total right now of about 250 sites.

But we are not particularly happy with the way the sites are being operated in the Province and we're trying to improve the situation. Basically we have been for a long time in low gear, I guess, and we're trying to shift into second gear. Until we get the program into operation, ultimately we're going to be in fifth gear, but it's going to take a little bit of time and where the Town of Chatham is right now with their site, we've got them to cut out the burning, they've got better control of the facility. It's not a sanitary landfill by any stretch of the imagination but it's a better controlled facility now and I think in terms of the number of complaints we're getting from smoke and nuisance and that sort of thing, the complaints over the last year have dropped dramatically. But the site is not perfect. We've got a ways to go yet.

Eventually either that site or a site in that vicinity will become a proper commission landfill site and that's a completely different type of facility. It's got a leachate collection system. It's got monitoring wells. It's got somebody there all the time and it's got proper equipment and the garbage is covered on a daily basis and that's the fifth gear that we're talking about. But we're just, there's no question that the type of facilities that we have now are totally inadequate and are burning, we're trying to cut them out and it's going to be a while.

TAYLOR:

How often do you monitor a site like this? What about pest control? What does the Province do to in the pest control area in a site like this that seems to be never looked after?

LUTES:

In terms of the rodent control program? Basically our inspectors visit the sites periodically. I might put another dig in here that the Department right now in terms of solid waste management has a staff of one engineer and one technician to monitor 250 sites. It's totally inadequate. But we do monitor the sites. We check the operation of them and we've looked at the PCA program and we don't have a lot of problems with the way PCA do their business, but again if you have a proper sanitary landfill, you shouldn't have to have rodent control. If the material is covered every day, compacted properly and covered every day then you shouldn't have a problem with rodents.

TAYLOR:

That's not the case in this McKnight dump?

LUTES:

No, it's not and there's many of the sites in the Province that we have to have rodent control.

JEFFREY:

I wish you'd answer a couple of questions. Is that facility supposed to be completely surrounded by fence or is it open for any animal to get in? Is there burning allowed to be taking place there right now?

LUTES:

I honestly can't tell you whether the McKnight Road site has a license. I indicated earlier on, we started licensing the sites with certificates of approval and one of the conditions of that approval is that there shall be no further burning at the site. I can't tell you whether the McKnight Road site has a certificate of not.

JEFFREY:

OK. There's two people hired right there now for three weeks to burn on the site. It talked to them today myself. I've seen them putting the gasoline over it and lighting the matches to it.

LUTES:

I would hope that that site does not have a license in that case. If that is the situation at the McKnight Road site, that is not unique to that location. We have many others.

JEFFREY:

You have the Chatham site, which is locked up at night. We have Loggievillle site, which is locked up and under supervision. Where are they going to dump their materials if it isn't in our backyard?

LUTES:

One of the problems we have with locking up the sites and I'm not saying that locking the sites is not a good idea but in many cases where we've put gates and barriers up, people just dump outside the gates and then you've got another dump outside the gates. People are not necessarily very civic minded when it comes to the local dump. If they can't get in, if it's inconvenient, they just dump it on the ground or in the ditch or the roadway or whatever.

JEFFREY:

I've never noticed that location on the Bathurst highway for the Chatham dump. I've never seen any garbage dumped on the outside of that fence. The odd little bit or something yes. I'd rather see it out on the side of the road where we can see what it is, than inside there where it's just buried.

LAPIERRE:

I wonder if I could maybe ask you a few questions of you sir, if you don't mind? One of the reasons we're here is because you have problems such as the ones you've discussed. And I think we as New Brunswickers have to take it upon ourselves that we do not have an adequate waste disposal system. What we want to do is to propose an adequate one. I think all these stories I've heard tonight, even the Chatham one, that doesn't seem like an adequate disposal system for the twentieth century. If you go back to the Roman times, they did the same thing. Maybe a little better than the way we do it.

So, I think we've evolved along the way but our waste disposal. So one of the things we're looking at is regional landfill sites which would be landfilled every day, in which wells would be dug around these sites and they'd be monitored on either a yearly or monthly basis depending on the needs. And these would be controlled. I'm wondering if you would support, do you support such a system? Would the people here want to have such a system?

JEFFREY:

With the proper location, the proper care taken to it, definitely, yes.

LAPIERRE:

And would people be willing to pay for such a system? It does cost money you know.....I'm just asking the questions to the gentleman but everybody could answer. We'd like for you to go to a microphone. The reason is that this is being prerecorded so..

JEFFREY:

I would rather pay for a dump today than a funeral ten years down the road. With the proper management, that's all we ask. We're paying everything to the government now. A little bit more isn't going to hurt us.

LAPIERRE:

Thank you sir. Does anyone...yes?

MCLAUGHLIN:

John McLaughlin. I'm a town councillor here in Chatham. Wayne Jeffries is talking about the McKnight Road dump site and here a year ago NB Power applied for a rezoning in Chatham to dump their ashes when the new power plant is in operation. At the time when it is supposed to be run on a full capacity it's supposed to be putting out around 15.7 tons of ash a day and the proposal by NB Power, what they were going to do with the dump site, by putting a clay liner in the bottom and everything, met all the standards and specifications that is known for this type of dump site. But we didn't want the dump site in Chatham. And if at the time the rezoning was allowed maybe the plastic bags with the containers that you're talking about Harry would be dumped in that there site today before the ashes got there and later on covered over by the ashes.

But right there now is that I was one of the main objectors to the rezoning at the time. What was going on, in my thinking at the time, was that NB Power had this project going on and there was not great sums of money put into waste disposal of the ash or looking at other sites. And all the money for the construction of the new site was to be provided mostly by the federal government. And our federal government continually brings it up to the Americans about acid rain and about hazardous waste coming over across our border. And here they are, they went and budgeted for a new project in Chatham being built and never took in the same considerations of proper disposal of the waste at the time.

Before this comment I had a few other things to say and each year 5,000 new chemicals are introduced to the public whether they're used in industry or municipalities and we all come in contact with these new chemicals or toxic substances. American government research indicates approximately 38% of all cancer fatalities should be blamed on exposure to materials that we come in contact on a daily basis. In Canadian terms, this means as many as 16,000 persons die each year because of this exposure.

However, our children were dying from Reye's Syndrome for years and we were all in the dark and Reye's Syndrome is the result of a man-made product. Another man-made product that has been banned everywhere in North America but not in New Brunswick is 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T, Agent Orange. One of the components in Agent Orange that is defoliager, that's the 2,4,5-T part is a weed killer that regulates plant hormones and causes a plant to grow itself to death. It was used to clear right-of-ways for NB Power and to kill weeds in pastures. In forests they mix two to four pounds of this 2,4-T component with 700 gallons of oil and spray it on their hardwood. Agent Orange kills hardwood by making trees grow themselves to death.

They use Agent Orange to kill the hardwoods to make more room for spruce to grow in their forests for the pulp mills in the area. In animal studies one trillionth of an ounce can cause noticeable changes; it increases intensity in organisms and water concentrations. In humans it is broken down, it causes rare cancers. It causes deformity in children and New Brunswick has three times more skin cancer than Nova Scotia. It is banned everywhere but not in New Brunswick and I hope that the recommendations that this committee goes back to is taken into account a little more strongly than they take into account the use of the 2,4-T in the Province.

Recently we have all been involved with the dilemma of PCB's in Renous and since then an education process has been taking place on the Miramichi. People are concerned with the dumping of waste at the McDonald Road and this shows that the people on the Miramichi are starting to watch and question what is going on in our area. The PCB announcement in Renous has raised a few concerns. Once the announcement was done in haste with no thought to the community. The majority of us in this room associate one particular thing or an incident to a community when that name is mentioned. If someone mentions to someone in this room the word Campbellton, we think of the mental ward.

If someone mentions to us the word Dorchester, we think of a prison and when we think of Renous, we think of a maximum security prison and a PCB storage site. After an announcement like this, who want to build a house or start a small business in the Renous area. Think of what it's done to the Miramichi as a tourist attraction and as the salmon capital of the world. Hasty decisions like the Renous PCB affair proves that no serious thought was put into the decisions to locate there at the time.

We've grown as grim about hazardous wastes as people menaced by the plague and the bitterest irony of all is that modern waste treatment plants are not welcome in our communities. NIMBY is Not in My Backyard and I think someone here, Wayne said it already tonight. In our own community here in the last couple of years, one of the headlines in the recent papers was the dumping of urea formaldehyde from the old Ciba Geigy plant in a few of the outlying areas. It's just one of the concerns, where is stuff being dumped on a day to day basis. They say that maybe it's going back to the McKnight Road or maybe it is going in the Chatham dump but with this here account of the time, that was brought up at the time about urea formaldehyde, you know, it makes us all wonder what else is being dumped around the area.

I've heard stories from people where PCB's in a local plant in the area here is being dumped into the oil storage shed and burned in the boiler. There's no boiler in this area that has the heat to burn off that. No sir. And that there ash and the dirt is falling down over that community. What should we do?

On the Miramichi we should select one site for hazardous wastes. A site not connected to any one community. A site with no name. It must be a place that will not affect our water. I think these are part of your own recommendations anyway, I was reading in your report. This site has to be licensed by the Province and the Province has to regulate with the citizens in the region involved to regulate these hazardous wastes. The site has to be inspected on a continuous basis. The site has to have plans and money for safe closure and years of close monitoring after the closure of that site, the test wells around the site and everything be checked into and watched continuously after the site even has been closed down.

The Province has to charge the large corporations who are causing the biggest majority of our hazardous waste. The charge is not to be a pittance and the corporations should be paying the majority share at the disposal site. This will force companies to alter their operations to reduce waste or to reuse it for energy and raw materials.

In closing, now the problem here has existed for a long time. Most of the answers are already solved by other communities in Canada and the United States. Let's not let this problem hang any longer for our children to solve for us.

LAPIERRE:

Thank you very much. I wonder if you may stay there for a few questions please? I have some and maybe some other members have some. I would like to know if we can read from your comments that you would suggest that hazardous waste be kept in the area or at the beginning we heard a presentation where the Province, at the present time, is looking at hazardous or toxic waste to have it shipped away from the Province to be incinerated in Ontario. Would this be a holding site that you would wish?

MCLAUGHLIN:

Yes, you mentioned, I read in the paper, I don't know if you mentioned here tonight that there's a new PCB site for burning in Quebec being built there now. That there could be holding site. I know the place where I worked, there has been a site that has been constructed with cement and retaining walls and the old transformers have been placed back there and any barrels with the materials in it have been sealed and stored back in that one area. That doesn't hold true for a lot of other places in the area. A lot of the waste in our own region could be stored there properly. Yes sir. But if there's facilities elsewhere that can get rid of it, well then it would be a holding site until we could transport it out to be disposed of properly.

LAPIERRE:

The Province is looking at the possibility of three sites or maybe six or seven sites for disposal of what they call controlled wastes, one of these controlled wastes being asbestos and you mentioned the problem with asbestos in Renous. If after having gone through the, if there's only three sites in the Province that are selected or four or five, each area won't have any. Saying after the exercise has gone out and the criteria are met and it's found to be that this area, the Miramichi, would be the most appropriate place because of geology...

MCLAUGHLIN:

We wouldn't feel one bit proud of it let me tell you.

LAPIERRE:

Would you have the Not In My Backyard Syndrome?

MCLAUGHLIN:

You're right. We would not be one bit proud to take Saint John's garbage up here. No, I think we have to recognize that, you know, the waste that we have here in our own region that we have to address the problem and we have to pick a site and we have to do the proper thing as far as storing it or disposing of it. Yes sir. I don't think, no way is anyone going to bring up anything from Moncton or Saint John and store it up here.

LAPIERRE:

As I gather you would prefer six or seven sites rather than two or three...

MCLAUGHLIN:

I think each region should address its own problem. I think if you start trying to go to any region and say that you can bring stuff from the Miramichi over to Fredericton area, then you're not going to get a very good response and vice versa.

LAPIERRE:

Thank you.

LANGMAID:

What happens, take the case of Saint John, where I'm afraid there's not going to be a good site found. What do you do in a case like that? You're going to have to move it someplace else. The conditions of this are very, very stringent. The soil conditions that would be recommended would be a minimum of 15 feet of heavy clay till on a site two or three kilometers away from any building, any place where a human would shack up. You can't cross the water of a large stream or anything like that to get to it. It must have access all year round. All these conditions, they're very few places in the Province that will meet this thing as near as I can see and soil is my specialty. I know the soils of the Province fairly well and you're going to have to move some of that from one area to another, there's just not that many sites in the Province that'll meet all the conditions. So, you're going to have to take a little broader sense of what your backyard is, I think.

MCLAUGHLIN:

There are places where they take some material that it can be done this way, where it is broken right down where it can be pumped four or five miles down into the earth. There's other areas too where there's giant caverns dug and where there's cement poured in the caverns and everything. Everything is stored in garbage barrels and sealed and placed in there and room made where it could be expanded on year after year. That's done there now in Germany and in Japan. West Germany there now takes a lot of their other toxic substances and it's burnt off with other chemicals out in the ocean where it concentrates and falls on the salt water and is nullified. There's lot of other ways of getting rid of it, but it's a lot more expensive.

LANGMAID:

This is what the sites in Quebec are going to be like, as near as I can find out. You've seen the site in Germany or the films of it, this type of thing, how it operates and what not. This is the type of thing I think they're putting in Quebec, the same type....

MCLAUGHLIN:

One article I read was in last year's March National Geographic and they had about a 40 page article on it and it showed how, there was a couple of towns in the States down there that were closed right down on account of the hazardous waste problems they're having and how they are handling it. And how the large corporations are funding it and I think they're talking something like 309, it is in the billions of dollars it's costing them to clean up their mess down there for letting it go so long. It shows what they're doing in Germany and Japan and other countries and how they're storing it.

LANGMAID:

This is what they're proposing for their radioactive materials putting it down 2,000-3,000 feet into a granite batholithe and running out a series of tunnels out and drilling holes in the end of that and putting their radioactive material down in that and sealing it, with monitors. But this is an expensive dog-gone proposition.

MCLAUGHLIN:

When you mention about bringing something from one region to another, it's the first thing we think of was what's coming from Lepreau up here and where the Province is considering looking at Lepreau II.

LANGMAID:

None of these things will be radioactive. These semi-hazardous waste disposal, that's entirely different proposition.

MCLAUGHLIN:

I think you'll have an awful lot of opposition if you're trying to move one region's when this region here...

LANGMAID:

What if you have no soil conditions right here that will handle it? Would you still want them to keep it here or would you rather have them move it to somebody else's backyard.

MCLAUGHLIN:

We're going to have to start looking at finding more money to take care of the problem.

LANGMAID:

Even your bedrock here is not suitable for it.

MCLAUGHLIN:

I know. The salmon's good though.

LAPIERRE:

I wonder if I may ask just one more question? It's a question other people might answer also. Hazardous waste, whether it's kept locally or whether it's moved into an area, often times it's trucked along your roads. I was wondering what the people feel on the methods of transportation. Number one is should we have special routes where these chemicals travel along? Should it be done at night? Should it be done by train or truck? Or should it be done it daylight? And should these be identified? You know how we move trailers along the road, we have a flashing truck ahead, or would you want to know if chemicals are moving into your area? And how much would you want to know?

MCLAUGHLIN:

Well, at the time when we were looking at that ash dump site and we were looking at how it was going to be transported at the time and we talk about our technology and we can construct trucks today to haul anything at all that there won't be any spillage. Yes sir. There's no trouble in designing some kind of a container in the back of a truck to haul something so it doesn't spill.

But I think it should be hauled in daylight, and it should be a controlled haul and also every precaution should be taken because if there's a spill on the roads in this community, the first people that are going to have to respond to that is our local fire brigades and they're all volunteers. They're the ones who are going to be walking in there and handling this stuff and usually there's a panic on half the time, when something like this happens, and you've got a real problem then. But I think now days there should be no problem for us to sit down and talk about what type of vehicle is going to handle it and how we're going to handle it and what time of day and the whole procedure for doing it. Once it's talked about and laid out, there should be no trouble in doing it.

LAPIERRE:

But even with the best of vehicles there are accidents. For example, in Ontario yesterday a special train which was carrying just acid derailed and dumped its content into lakes, so as more and more chemicals are transported either within the Province, would you want, I gather from what you're saying, that would be willing to accept special regulations for travelling within the Province?

MCLAUGHLIN:

For that type of waste and stuff?

LAPIERRE:

Wastes or products, hazardous chemicals in general.

MCLAUGHLIN:

Down in the States with the Three Mile Island thing, the federal government or the American government made special concession at that time to the transportation of the radioactive wastes down there. The very first convoy that went out, they got about 40 miles away and they rolled the truck. And there was a convoy of army people and everything behind it and in front of it, and they still rolled the truck. So, anything can happen that way. But I wouldn't take a truck out in a snowstorm either, you know.

LAPIERRE:

Thank you very much sir.

WILLISTON:

Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, and again in response to Councillor McLaughlin's comments, I'd like to say John that regarding the ash disposal, I don't know if you've been misinformed or not John but certainly my information is that NB Power has gone to all lengths to look for a suitable site and suitable method to dispose of the ash etc. I think probably they've looked at about four or five sites now and they've finally settled on an area that's environmentally wise. It's the ideal location, I'm not going to say idea because I certainly don't know the story, but on the other hand I would like to bring the attention of the people here that this is a model project.

Thirty-five million, in excess maybe of thirty-five million that's being spent in the Town of Chatham. Basically the money is being directed towards the Chatham plant which may be economically wise as far as power. I'm certainly not a spokesman although I'm a member of the Board I'm not a spokesman for NB Power, that might be extinct. It is a project which is going to be a model for maybe North America for the disposal of sulfur content and this is the, probably, I don't know how many millions of dollars are being spent to this extent, like I say, particularly the coal-fire units all over North America. I personally am glad that Chatham was selected and it left this x amount of dollars to the Miramichi system. I'm extremely proud that it came here and I think it's a first and I'm very glad to be part of it.

LANGMAID:

Are you referring to the fluid bed system they are putting in?

WILLISTON:

Yes I am sir.

LAPIERRE:

Are there any other comments?

MARTIN:

My name is Cathy Martin and I'm just a local resident here in Chatham and I'd like to commend the government to have the guts to have a Committee like yourself to go out and to face the people and say that they do have a problem and they are looking for a way of handling it. I think that maybe residents in our area, and I know they have a right to be concerned and we all worry about our children and our own safety, but we have to realize that these chemicals are there and if the government has to find a way, and it has to be here, then perhaps we have to face that.

We can't look at the people in Saint John or in Moncton and say their lives aren't worth ours or are less than ours. And I think the best thing is for people to realize and to put all their effort into getting a safe way of handling these things rather than saying our areas is too good for it or we're too good for it. I think they have to take the general public into consideration and I think that they should think that way a little more here and have a little more consideration for human beings rather than perhaps the fact that someone is going to say well we have a dump in our backyard. Well we already do and we don't like it either. So I think that if the government can make them safe and do something in that regard that they should be commended for it.

LAPIERRE:

Thank you.

TAYLOR:

I'm glad you brought that up. I wonder if there's anyone here from Renous, since they had such a recent problem? Anyone here from Newcastle?

LAPIERRE:

Go ahead Madame, you had your.....

CLARK:

What did you want to know?..... (tape inaudible)....

First of all, I just want to say that I think it's terrible that there are so few people here tonight. The problems you are talking about are very serious, and, as far as I am concerned, the fact that so many people in our area were against bringing PCB's to Renous shows how serious the problems are, but I just can't believe that more people are not here tonight to talk about them.

I don't think there is anybody sitting in this room tonight that hasn't had someone in their family or in their neighborhood with cancer. When you go through something like that and see what it does, you get pretty upset when someone says they are going to bring things which cause cancer and put them in your area. Now there's a lot of people in our area that have had cancer in their families. When I think of my children and grandchildren at risk from something like that, I just can't understand why anybody would come up with a plan to send stuff like that to Renous. I am certainly not an expert as far as these chemicals and wastes are concerned, and just standing up talking is making me very nervous, but I want to say that there has to be a better way of taking care of these wastes than storing them in our area.(tape inaudible)

KERR:

I wonder if I could ask a question which is a bit hypothetical. It is obvious that the proposal to store this material near Renous was unacceptable to you. But what I am wondering about is, what would have been your reaction if the PCB material was a waste produced during normal operations by a plant, or a company of some sort that was operating in the area and providing jobs for local residents? How would you have felt in that situation - when, instead of coming from Moncton, the waste was produced by a local firm that had contributed something to the community?

CLARK:

I don't think that would make any difference to me. When you are concerned about cancer, and the health of your family, and your neighbors, I don't think it matters where the dangerous stuff comes from. You still can get very scared if they want to put it near you. It makes me sick just to think about it.

LAPIERRE:

Thank you very much, Madame, for your comments. I would just like to know if there's anyone else in the audience that wishes to present something to the panel? Yes sir?

ALLAN:

Dr. C.M. Allan, Newcastle. I'm not an expert on pollutants or the handling of them. My main concern I think would be those things classed as toxic wastes. I think the others, you know, providing you go ahead with what you've already recommended, I would imagine a lot of those things can be solved.

However, what I say isn't going to be a solution either. Just really to express some of the concerns because I hear the same thing from Mayor Bowes to the lady from up Renous way. But I think the concerns of the public are justified. The knowledge of the toxicities, the ultimate toxicities of various substances, is probably just in its infancy to know what ultimately these things will do to the environment, because there's nothing to base it on in the past. They're new substances in larger amounts.

For that reason, they're concerned. I personally think we have to take a moderate view. If we produce those waste substances, we've got to do something to put them away ourselves. I don't think we can dump them all on other Provinces. So I think we have to take measures for their safe disposal but to date the evidence is that what was considered proper have soon proved inadequate. Stop gap measures are then and they too often are inadequate.

The transportation of them, all too inadequate, rail and road and there are instances all the time of pollution of the environment in out of the way areas, this last one apparently a real problem to get to and submerged cars already in the river. Not planned, accidents and yet that's just part of industry. That wasn't a pollutant, that's just on its way to be used that sulfuric acid.

When those things do happen, there has been a tendency of officials perhaps from industry, sometimes from government making what obviously is a cover up or a minimization, there's no real risk to the environment. There's no real risk to human life, and then perhaps events or knowledge proves that not quite true. So I think governments I guess have to provide, or experts have to provide more information so that people can perhaps take a more rational view as to what exactly the toxicities of these things are. What the ideal way to handle them is cause most of us don't know, and then do a job of educating the public and do a better job both in education and insuring that the methods or storage and transport are more secure than they are at present. Otherwise I think the public is every bit justified to feel anxious and be irrational.

LAPIERRE:

Doctor, I wonder if I may ask you a question? When you indicate that there should be better indications for transportation, would you for example as a citizen like to know when you're travelling on the highway that you're either following or you've been passed by a truck that's carrying a hazardous chemical? Would you like the vehicle so marked, I mean when we see an ambulance we know what to expect, we can pull aside. Many trucks on the road carry hazardous wastes, would you want to know that one of these trucks has passed by?

ALLAN:

Well, I think in the past, you know, across the back of the bumper, it sometime says explosives. I don't know just what that means. They seem to be travelling as fast as I am or have been. I think it would be a good idea because on some of our roads, they're passing me in shaking places and it's icy around these parts. Yes, I think, maybe they should go at special times, but I don't know just when they would be. I think there are already some guidelines on Trans Canada for trucks of certain size, I guess. I think probably they should be marked. I suspect there are things transported on our roads by private industry, private contractors to dispose of this or that, that goes undocumented currently. I mean it may be caught from time to time but I mean, enforcement of, if they had to carry a sign or a light or some signal that they did carry it would have to be enforced by somebody as well.

LANGMAID:

You would consider not only hazardous wastes but hazardous materials such as the sulfuric acid, chlorine, propane....?

ALLAN:

The things that do vegetation, animal life harm, the environment harm. I can't see anything wrong with say, digging a hole in the ground and sticking asbestos in it, that's where it came from. To what extent it gets leached out as a fibre because it's more concentrated and less fixed than it was when it was in it's (tape inaudible) in the basic rocks but for those other things, ya the chemicals.

LAPIERRE:

Does anyone else have any comments on the transportation of wastes? Would most people like to know when they're driving along the road if you're following or being followed by a truck?

SMITH:

I believe there are regulations that are changing right now aren't there?

GODIN:

There are regulations that are already effective for the transportation of dangerous goods and hazardous waste. And to people who are in trucking or in the regulatory agencies, we've noticed these trucks on the road now for the last six to eight months and what's obvious to me is not obvious to anybody else. If you've noticed trucks with a square placard and you see the gasoline trucks have them, the propane trucks have them, the trucks that carry oxygen or any compressed gas and a lot of the transport trucks also have squares. They are about ten inch square placards. They are in different colors, some are white, some are red. They have two numbers. They have a number that's a four digit number which is a code number that tells the regulatory agencies, the firemen or the cops if there is an accident. That number tells them immediately before they go near the truck what the chemical is that's inside the truck. There's a small number also on that placard that identifies the class, if it's a corrosive, if it's an explosive product, if it's a toxic product or if it's an environmentally-hazardous waste product.

So, if you haven't been aware of it before I think you will notice them because I notice them on the road all the time when I travel now. And you also see the trucks, especially the transport trucks, with the empty square plastic holder that's on the back of the truck, on the front and on both sides.

SMITH:

Has there been any attempt to inform the public in general about that, as opposed to a few people that are here tonight?

GODIN:

The implementation of the placarding comes under the Department of Transportation and they do have pamphlets but I'm not sure how they're being distributed. The provincial DOT does have information on the different placards, what they mean, but they have been focussing their effort on the people they are trying to regulate at the moment. So that the truckers, the firemen and the policemen are being trained to be aware of the regulation and how to respond to spills. Under the Department of Municipal Affairs and Environment there is the Emergency Measures Organization and even though we haven't signed an agreement with the federal government yet to implement the transportation of dangerous goods for transportation inside the Province, the Emergency Measures Organization has taken the lead in providing training for people to respond to accidents or situations where they need to know what chemicals are being transported, what chemicals are involved. That's been going on for the last six months or so and there's Emergency Measures, people from Environment New Brunswick are involved and, like I said, the firemen or the policemen.

SMITH:

Are there any loopholes in that? Is it both in Province and through the Province all covered?

GODIN:

The placarding is required for both in the Province and outside the Province. That is a federal requirement that applies already. Part of the regulation that does not apply is the part that covers the transportation of hazardous waste inside the Province because we haven't signed an agreement. It's being worked out now between the Department of Transport and Transport Canada.

LAPIERRE:

So at the present time I could take a truck from Newcastle, drive to Saint John with hazardous waste and not have it labelled?

GODIN:

No, you would have to have it labelled. You would not have to have a manifest. The label is a requirement that's already in effect, but some of the requirements that are...

SMITH:

The manifest is like a receipt for having shipped it and received it sort of thing?

GODIN:

It's a document which is more than a weighbill. All the trucks are required to have a weigh bill if they are transporting products, they need a document saying what it is they are transporting and it describes the chemical.

The manifest is a document which is required for waste and which identifies the generator of the waste, the carrier of the waste and the intended receiver and various copies of the manifest are sent, by the generator and the receiver to Provincial authorities so that the Provincial authorities can also check that that transaction has been completed.

LANGHAID:

Who is checking this? The weigh scales? The Highway Patrol?

GODIN:

The Highway Patrol have been active in checking it. The weigh scales also. The assignment of responsibility has not yet been determined specifically. There are already some federal inspectors that have been appointed under the regulation. Environment Canada has trained, and that's where you see that it's difficult. Environment Canada has only 16 inspectors across the country that are trained under the Transportation Of Dangerous Goods Act. And Transport Canada, I don't think they have all that many more. It's a big regulation and it'll need a lot of manpower to enforce it. The regulation is just the first step.

But as far as people knowing that hazardous products and hazardous waste are in trucks on the road, you can look for those placards and you will know if you see a placard, then they're carrying something that's dangerous in one way or another.

LANGMAID:

Are these colour coded too or just numbered?

GODIN:

They are colour coded except some, I'm trying to think back, some classifications have the same colours. There are nine classifications, there are not nine different colours.

LANGMAID:

I don't want to get close enough to them to be able to read the numbers, to tell you the truth.

GODIN:

If you can see that there's a placard, you'll know that it's something that's hazardous. It's like trying to get close to the car in front of you to read the bumper sticker.

LAPIERRE:

I guess the question I would ask the people here is, is a placard enough to warn you? Or would you want, you know, when we move a mobile home we see to it that we have a flashing truck that forwards it. We know what's coming. Would you want to know if you see an ambulance light, you know it's an ambulance. If you have to get close enough to see the placard would you want them identified in a better way than a placard? Yes sir?

MR. CINCURAK:

Would the placard warn you what the substance is and how to treat it?

GODIN:

I wouldn't warn the everyday citizen. It would warn the responding agencies.

SMITH:

Fire brigades and things like this.

GODIN:

Fire brigades and I'm glad you brought it up because if you are on the road and you come to the scene of an accident and there's a placard, don't go near it. If there's a placard, it's a hazardous product, don't go near it. You are not equipped to handle it. Just go call somebody who has the training to do it. So the placard should tell you that, don't go near it.

MRS. CINCURAK:

Why don't they advertise that on TV?

SMITH:

I asked that question and basically the answer was that they were just getting it in effect now and they're more concerned about training, there's lot a fire brigades who probably don't know all the details yet let alone you and me. And eventually, I presume....

GODIN:

This is an implementation period. As I explained before they have not started levying fines on people who are not complying because it's a new regulation and there's a phase-in period where they are stopping trucks and they are telling them if they're not complying with the regulation. They're giving them warnings and there's a year phase-in so that people can learn how to work under the regulation and conform to the regulation and we're in that period now.

SMITH:

Louis was asking about the idea of an ambulance type of thing where they show up real well, but how many vehicles would you be talking about on the roads every day of the week. I am picturing hundreds.

I think we're in much more serious condition than what the population of Canada realizes. So I'd like to leave that with you is the number one is the seriousness of the situation as it exists today in Canada, and as a supplement to that I'd like to say that I'm very concerned about the United States attitude towards acid rain. Very concerned about it.

The other point I'd like to leave is that I'd like to see the Department of Environment, not only in this Province, but in all of Canada, play a much more significant role than it's playing today. Thank you very much.

LAPIERRE:

Thank you sir. Are there any other comments?

WALKER:

I'd like to voice another concern about the old Newcastle dump. Now, there's not more domestic garbage going there, but they're still dumping a lot of material down there, like the old trees and old buildings they tear down, concrete they break up and any waste soil is going in there.

Now that's no hazard in itself but it's burying a valuable part of our environment and that's a salt marsh. We have a very limited amount of salt marsh really and I didn't intend to get up here and speak, I haven't got figures but I've read on the Eastern Seaboard of the United States, it's well over half of the salt marsh is just disappeared because people regard this as waste land, useless land and so just bury it up so they can make use of it. But biologists claim that a salt marsh will produce seven or eight times as much vegetation as a good wheat field and all this vegetation goes through the ecosystem and feeds one thing after another and again, biologists say that as this goes through the food chain and the tides go up and down, they wash all that those products throughout the estuary of the river.

GODIN:

You're talking about a lot because you have to remember that the hazard in transportation is the same for the products as it is for waste. And there's a lot of products. You know, the truck that delivers fuel to your homes is carrying a hazardous product.

SMITH:

It would have one of those placards?

GODIN:

Yes, they have the placards. I'm sure you'll notice them tomorrow.

SMITH:

You'd spend all your time on the side of the road letting them go by.

LAPIERRE:

Yes sir?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

A truck carrying a bulldozer quite often will have a flashing light and it brings your attention to it very quickly.

LANGMAID:

This might be a colour-coded light, it's not a red one or a blue one or a yellow one that's commonly used, but some other indication that you'd know what it was.

SMITH:

Why I asked about how many, you get to the point where if every truck on the highway has a flashing light, you don't pay attention any more. I feel more nervous meeting a pulp truck on a turn waiting for one of the top logs to come off and hit me in the head.

The estuary of the river is sort of a cradle for a lot of offshore fish. So that, the more salt marsh you bury, you're depleting the food supply for the estuary which is the nursery for the offshore fishing. People don't appreciate what a salt marsh is, they've always regarded it as something useless. Anyway, Newcastle's old dump is just an example of how salt marshes all over the Eastern Seaboard are just gradually disappearing. It's not so much in Canada yet, maybe, but certainly besides the fishery too, it is a very valuable thing for migrating birds too. There's an awful lot of birds stop over in marshes like that on their migration.

LAPIERRE:

Thank you. Are there any further comments? If not, then I guess in a closing summary I was glad to hear Mr. Green state that the people of the Miramichi and also from other comments have now awakened their environment conscience and they're going to be much more aware of the chemicals that come in their environment. I would like to suggest that one must not only look at the hazardous chemicals. There are a lot of chemicals that are sleeping within us and even if they are small quantities, one has to be very careful and as I listen to the people express their concerns with the local general waste disposal sites, I think that when our recommendations are put forth, and when the government bring forth it's plans for landfill sites, which would be properly addressed where garbage would be disposed of in a proper manner and security wells and so on would be installed that the people that are here along with the other people of the Miramichi would go along with these plans.

Because an improperly buried waste in the long term can be just as dangerous as a truckload of hazardous waste today because once you get a water table that's polluted, it could be polluted for a long, long time. And a lot of people depend on groundwater for their daily water supply and also you mustn't forget that on the Miramichi little brooks and streams, I don't think you can find too many places where you won't find a little brook that finally ends up in a big stream and the big stream ends up in the big river. And if you hold to your big river as Mr. Green indicated for a tourist attraction, I think not only should you look for a clean river today but you should also look for a clean river for your children in years to come. So hopefully the total waste management package will be looked in to as vigilantly as you looked not having waste brought into your area.

LAPIERRE:

OK. Thank you Miss Godin. Are there any other comments or questions? Yes madame?

MRS. CINCURAK:

Personally, I think six months for something that is this serious, I really do think there should be some public input, just for the average citizen. I mean nobody's going to, if there's a truck overturned, nobody's going to jump out of their car and go and be a hero. You're going to stay away and you're probably going to try and get out of the area to save congestion. But I do think that they should implement something within a short period of time to let people know what they're planning and what it means. I think that's essential and to me that six months is too long. A year is too long. I think there are ways of getting to the people faster and it may cost a bit of money with advertising what it does cost, but it would be better.

TAYLOR:

Do you feel that the press should play a bigger role in this?

MRS. CINCURAK:

Of course, why not? That's one of the most important people, people read the papers, they watch TV.

TAYLOR:

Do the press have any questions?

MRS. CINCURAK:

Write your articles boys.

LANGMAID:

That's one of the things that's not sensational.

MRS. CINCURAK:

Right, that's the problem. It's not sensational.

LAPIERRE:

I wonder if Madame Godin, what would happen if I travelled on the road without a manifest once your six months phase-in period is over. Would my truck be seized? Would I get a \$10 fine or what is it?

GODIN:

Your truck can be seized if the inspector is not satisfied that the documents are in order or that the load isn't secure, that you're carrying what you say you're carrying. And I believe the fines go up to \$50,000.

LAPIERRE:

That's OK. I wonder if, I see Mr. Green is in the assembly now. Do you have any comments or questions Mr. Green?

GREEN:

Actually, I'm quite late getting here, I'm sorry for that but first of all I congratulate the government in taking this initiative. I think it's a very good one, a very positive one and certainly very timely.

I am somewhat, I guess, concerned because of some comments I heard out in the lobby earlier where some people had the idea that certain decisions had already been made, but that may have been simply a mistaken impression that they had and I wasn't here so I can't answer that, but that was a comment or two that I had heard.

I think that one thing I can say as a resident of the Miramichi, I think in the last month, we probably have had our environmental antennae vibrated more than we have in a good many years. And largely due to what took place in Renous. I think that that particular issue brought a lot of things home to us about the kinds of things that exist in this Province of ours and the sorts of things that can happen to our communities as well if we're not careful.

I might just for a moment talk about that because I think that what you're doing suggests quite a different approach and that's why I feel good about it. The reason the, probably the main reason the federal government got into trouble with their decision to move hazardous waste into Renous was they hadn't bothered telling anybody about it locally and in fact they had no intention of telling anybody about it. And they stated that quite emphatically. That made people very suspicious of what they might put in there given the chance.

The other thing that concerned us was the location that they chose was not appropriate from our point of view because it closely bordered three different river courses. When that ammunition depot was put there it was located there to protect it from fire and so it had as much water around it as it possibly could have. Hardly the place to put a hazardous material storage area. At least in our opinion.

Another factor was the water table itself and the pump tests that were done in that particular area when the prison was being built indicated that the water level in the wells rises when the tide comes in and lowers when the tide goes out, suggesting that there's a fair amount of connection from one to the other. The geological structure there happens to be sand and gravel on top and if there were a spillage of some sort of material, it would go immediately into the water table and presumably into the water courses and if you're talking about chemicals that don't break down in nature, then you've got a problem that is irretrievable.

Another major problem we had with it is that the so-called socio-economic study that was done failed to take the tourism industry in the Miramichi into account at all. I have a copy of the report and there are two lines given to the economic impact of that particular thing or the establishment of that facility on the Miramichi. In talking to Mr. MacMillan's office in Ottawa, the Minister of Environment, formerly the Minister of Tourism, I wasn't talking to him but, he wasn't available, but I did talk to one of his executive assistants and I asked her how they would feel about establishing such a facility on Cavendish Beach or in Jasper National Park? And I pointed out to her that we have a tourist image on the Miramichi of which we're very proud. One of the main attractions we have is the fact that basically we have a wilderness area and a wilderness area with a chemical dump in it isn't as attractive as one without and that was the point I was making.

Anyway the fact of the matter is that they simply hadn't done their homework and they got caught and because they hadn't done their homework and because what they were doing was offensive to the community and it was offensive to our well being, the entire community resisted it. It wasn't just Renous either. It was the entire Miramichi. The people of Renous were very grateful for the support given to them. I know personally I had telephone calls from people living in Chatham, up in Sillikers, up in Boisetown, Blissfield, all along the river from concerned citizens. And they were willing to band together to ensure the fact that that particular situation did not occur.

As so as I say, although the Renous situation was not a pleasant one for any or us, at the same time it may have been, perhaps now that we have ensure ourselves that it's not going to happen, it may have been a blessing in disguise in the sense that it's made us all more aware of the type of environmental or chemical threats, I should say in our environment.

Now that doesn't mean that we're not willing to do our share in dealing with the chemicals that we have but it's got to be a considered share and it's got to be something that we're a part of. Not something that is foisted upon us and it's got to be that way. I think there are certain criteria that should be established for the construction of a proper storage facility. Personally, and I'll tell you what I think they are.

I think first of all any storage facility must be necessarily away from human habitation and a long ways away from human habitation. I think, secondly, it should be a facility that is properly constructed from the ground up to house those particular materials. Thirdly, I think the area chosen should be one that is geologically sound, that isn't going to be disrupted by any kind of earthquakes or what have you. I think, fourthly, the federal and provincial governments and the various companies involved in the use of these hazardous waste are going to have to start addressing the problem of decomposition. You're going to have to learn to take apart some of these chemical monsters and make them harmless. We can't go on storing these things forever. Somebody is going to have to do something about it. And I think that those are some of the things that governments are going to have to do and I think that all of this has to be done, as I say, in consultation with the people of the area if it's going to be successful.

Such an area, by the way, should be enclosed in fencing. It should be secure and it should have guards to ensure the fact that nobody is going to get in there and cause a problem. Those are some of the conclusions that we arrive at, as a result of the Renous experience and I trust that when you make your final report those will be among your recommendations to the government because I think those are the only ones that will be acceptable to the people of this Province.

LAPIERRE:

Thank you Mr. Green. Mr. Green would you mind?

SMITH:

Sir. When you had that incident the turn out of people was very large. I wonder what the turn out here indicates? Lack of interest now, they feel the situation has gone away?

GREEN:

I don't think so. I'll just say something about our Committee as an indication of that. We had talked a little bit about presenting a brief here tonight and we decided against it because basically we were a Committee that was chosen to act on a very specific issue and we didn't feel that we were mandated by the community at large to make a presentation on their behalf. However, the various Committee members did indicate that they were very much willing to act in the same capacity should another environmental problem present itself. So I guess basically they're telling me that they are on stand-by and if required they would be there and ready and willing to pitch in and help as much as necessary.

The fact that we don't have more people here tonight, I can't really answer that question. I can tell you why I was late but I really couldn't speak for other people. Maybe it's the sort of thing that most people are not familiar with. Some of these chemical names are half a mile long and as Mr. Allan said earlier, a lot of people are not aware of the kinds, I suppose, health impact some of these chemicals can have. It's a whole new world to all of us, I think. It's a world that we're just awakening to and I suspect this: that had you been having a meeting to consider the establishment of a hazardous waste site in or near this area, the crowd would have been slightly larger.

SMITH:

Just before the break, one gentleman asked the question about an abandoned site that's on the river and it's actually being flushed by the tide. We don't know what's in there and I don't think anybody does. Does that have a greater potential for being a troublesome problem that the Renous site itself?

GREEN:

Well, it may have and you know I'm glad that you've asked that question because today we had the public accounts and the Department of the Environment was present and I asked the same question to the officials. They told me that they had done a study of the abandoned dump sites in the Province a number of years ago and that currently they are in the process of carrying out extensive testing on the two worst. One on them was in Saint John, I forget where the other was, it wasn't here though. Because basically what I was asking is what they had done about cleaning it up in the year in question and the answer was that they had done some testing and that was about it.

But I was not aware of any such dump. I'd be more than pleased to talk to somebody who is aware of it and if the Department of the Environment has not yet done any testing there I'm sure we can quickly arrange for that and maybe we can see about cleaning it up and that perhaps is an example of how a community can work together in trying to clean up its own backyard in this sense. I would welcome that kind of information so that, you know, we could get on and do something about it. That is a hazard and I was not aware of that.

So, where is it?

LAPIERRE:

There's a gentleman here who mentioned it.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

The Newcastle dump.

GREEN:

Strawberry Marsh?

CORMIER:

We have two in Chatham and one in Newcastle. Abandoned dumps. We have one right under the current landfill there. It's been there for years and years. I hauled garbage there myself. (tape inaudible) The one in Newcastle especially, I think that would be the hazardous one.

GREEN:

That's the one they built the ball field on. Well, we'll certainly do some testing there I'm sure. OK, so that's about four.

CORMIER:

Yes, and how many more I don't know.

GREEN:

Did you get that Paul? Were there any other questions that you would...

CORMIER:

In the Miramichi area there's many gravel pits that have been used for years and years for dumps and someone covers them up maybe once or twice a year. The garbage in them, some of them hazardous too.

GREEN:

Might I just pose a question to you then, I'm wondering I just had a chance to glance through some of your information here and I noticed that you're talking about establishing three to six hazardous waste storage areas or dumps. I presume, are you talking dumps or storage areas?

LAPIERRE:

I guess these would be for controlled waste sites. This is the dump sites would be a different story. There's three aspects to our consultation. One of them is household dumps or disposal sites, the other one is controlled waste and one is hazardous waste.

Hazardous waste, the proposal that's before you would be to see it shipped out to a Province, like Ontario and Quebec where it would be incinerated and destroyed, from the cradle to the grave, as you mentioned a while ago. And the other one would be for controlled waste such as asbestos, where we would have regional sites and this is where you're looking at three to six or maybe seven. What we heard here tonight, I think we best look at seven, rather than three. For the regional waste disposal sites I guess those might be any number, maybe up to depending on the regional commissions themselves.

GREEN:

In terms of asbestos, one gentleman said he wouldn't mind having it buried in the ground. That probably isn't a bad idea. It's been suggested to me that it might be better buried in the ground at it's place of origin. I'm wondering if it might not be better off stored away in a shaft mine, asbestos mine in Thetford or somewhere like that, Thetford Mines, Quebec or you know, some of the sites of origin. A lot of those mines are abandoned. It may not be that far fetched an idea.

SMITH:

Do the Environment people have any comments on that? I think it's been covered before but...

LUTES:

Burying material or disposing material in abandoned mine shafts isn't really a far fetched idea, it's probably a good idea. In the Province of Quebec where they do a fair bit of mining of asbestos, we've been tempted by the opportunities that present themselves to have this material hauled to Asbestos. I'm told that there are acres and acres of asbestos tailings around the mines and the material that we would have to get rid of here in the Province of New Brunswick would be a drop in the bucket compared to what they now have in storage or in disposal. It's not such a crazy idea.

SMITH:

Am I right then that the real hazard to the asbestos that you would bury would be accidentally digging it back up? You know, if it's in 100 dumps around the Province, and people dig them up occasionally, this is where most of the hazard would be?

LUTES:

That's right. That's why we've taken the approach of making sure the material is in drums and put in the ground and covered over because the danger arises when you expose the material. The asbestos fibre may become airborne and it's the airborne fibre that causes the problem, has a tendency to cause a problem. There's documentation that the material in the ground, even if over a period of years the drum rusts out, the migration rate of asbestos fibre in soil is extremely low, something in the order of 10,000-20,000 years to go two or three inches or whatever, so the danger there is not all that great.

Just maybe to follow up on what Mr. Green had mentioned earlier on and the recommendations that he gave for locating these sites. I think we would agree with all of the recommendations. The one question or nagging doubt that we do have is if we go somewhere in the boondocks, 10-12 miles away from habitation, do we not create an image, the waste has the connotation of being that much more dangerous. In part I think that's how we've gotten into the problem that we're in today. That we've taken special care of asbestos. We've talked to all the other Provinces in Canada, and they haven't taken that kind of special care and they don't have the problem that we have today. And it seems that the further we go along the road of isolating this material, the more cloak and dagger our operation tends to appear and people just become more and more suspicious, the more and more care we take.

GREEN:

Just in response to that, I'm not going to turn this into a debate but I just might suggest to you that it seems to me that if there is a consultation process with people, if they know what it is that you're putting in there, if you're totally frank and honest with them from the very beginning and you show them that you have respect for them by taking this material away from their houses, that they would appreciate the job that you were doing more. I don't think that it would create in them any great fear, I think it would create a great deal of respect and appreciation on their part for what you were doing of their behalf. That it seems to be my reaction and I think I would say, well there, that's a good job, I'm glad. The government's done a good thing. You know, we don't often hear that every day but I'd say that in that case people would say the government has done a good job and that's how I would react to it.

How about the rest of you? Is that how you feel?

And if you try to put it close to a community to try to acclimatize us to the fact that it may not be as dangerous as perhaps we might think, then you're going to run into a lot of resistance. There's no question about it. You're going to run into a lot of resistance. And then you see there are other things that are happening now too. For example, the American government, the EPA is recommending that asbestos, in particular, be banned not only from importation to the country but that they're talking about banning the mining of asbestos in the United States. And this of course, has the asbestos workers in Quebec terrified as well as the Quebec government which happened to own a fairly large company up there and they're trying to wage the battle of convincing people that it isn't dangerous and the American people happen to feel that it is, the environment people at least, and this is something that appears to be part of an on-going process and so with that sort of background as well, it's probably going to add to people's concern as well.

LAPIERRE:

I wonder Mr. Green if you could answer one more question in regards to the financing of all these sites. If we're going to have controlled sites and so. Who do you think should pay for these sites?

GREEN:

Well Mr. Chairman I'll tell you. As long as I have had a nickel in my pocket I've always noticed that it's the people who pay in the end anyway, one way or the other. Either we pay through our taxes or we pay through a user fee or we pay through something. It doesn't matter how you slice it, in the end we're going to have to pay for it.

The other comment I might make is that we may have to pay some more than we have been paying in the past in order to put some of these chemical dangers to rest and that may be something that governments are going to have to face, that it is going to cost more money to come to terms with these things in order to protect the integrity of our environment and so whether it comes from taxpayers dollars today or from an increased tax or from a fee charged at a gate, it doesn't really matter. It still comes from the same pocket.

LANGMAID:

It doesn't come quite from the same pocket because if it's user fee, the people that are producing the stuff pay for it and that's the way it should be I think rather than put it through the taxes and coming back.

GREEN:

OK. I understand what you mean. I wasn't quite sure whether you were talking about something that, you know, everybody might be doing. For example getting rid of old florescent lights or whether you were talking about an individual company or the federal government maybe trying to dispose of asbestos or what have you. If you're talking about a company yes, user pay. Sure.

LANGMAID:

I think even our local garbage should be done that way. So much a pound, whatever you want to do. If you put in 100 pounds a week you pay for it, if you put in five pounds a week, you pay that much. If you're willing to produce 100 pounds, can afford to produce 100 pounds of it, pay for it. This gets it off of going through Fredericton and what not, all the headaches of that.

GREEN:

You must be from an area where they charge a water tax or something??

LANGMAID:

Very much so. And sewage taxes and pay for hauling your garbage.

LAPIERRE:

OK. Thanks a lot Mr. Green.

RICHARD:

I've been impressed with one thing here and that is the great hazard, the great problem we have in Canada seems to be mitigated by trade-offs. I listen to you talking and one person asked the lady from Renous how she would feel about, you know, if it was producing, if such an element was produced in Renous, would she feel better about it? And I got the feeling that there was a bit of mitigation here by one of the panel members.

I'd hope to prepare a specific report, not being a chemist and I'm not as qualified as maybe some of you people are, in this respect so I didn't prepare a report. But I'd just like to, I don't want to keep you much longer, I'd just like to say one thing and that's that I would like to see the Department of Environment be recognized as a much more important Department than it is today.

I think that the reason why I say that is because while I was sitting here I wanted to get up and say that I'm very, very, very concerned about Canada. And I'm very concerned about our future, very concerned. My closest friend was a PhD in chemistry and he spent most of his productive years working on pollution, but I'm not going to get into that, but I think that there should be a greater awareness of our problem. I've been very interested in China for the last number of years and I've been waiting for China to have an industrial revolution. China is now on the threshold of an industrial revolution but they have a tremendous problem because their environment was not looked after at the proper time.

But the only thing that I want to leave here, and I don't like getting up talking, it bothers me as much as it bothers somebody else. I say this because I'm very, very concerned about Canada and of course very concerned about the Province of New Brunswick and I don't know what your political clout is when you forward your recommendations but I'd just like to say that I think that you should be very, very concerned and that we are in a very, very, very serious situation as far as pollution in Canada is concerned and I would like to see you, the panel, when you submit your report, try to keep that in the back of your mind of the conditions that we find ourselves in now.

So with that I think I would thank all the people who came tonight and I'm sure that those who didn't come must share your concerns also. What we can ask you is when you go back home, talk to your neighbours. Tell them about it and when the plans come out, well you'll be ready to partake in a cleaner environment, for all of New Brunswick not only for today but for years to come.

I would also like to mention that we're here only as citizens like yourselves. We are citizens and we just want to listen. We happen to be a group together but we're advising the government. We are not part in the government. We're citizens and we'll send the message that we think the people of New Brunswick want to the government. Now we cannot implement the recommendations but our recommendations will certainly reflect your ideas and thoughts.

I guess on behalf of the Panel I'd like to thank you and good night.